

Remarks

This case has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated April 6, 2004, wherein claims 15-30 were subjected to a restriction requirement. Claim 11 was objected to because of the use of the word "current" in line 1. Claims 1-6, 8-10, 11 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Wei et al. (US6,352,636); claim 7 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Wei et al. (US 6,352,636) as applied to claim 1; and claims 12 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Wei et al. (US 6,352,636) as applied in claim 10 and further in view of Blomsterberg (4,269,677).

Claims 1, 8-10 and 11 have been amended and claim 6 has been cancelled. Claims 1-5 and 7-14 remain pending in this application. Reconsideration of the rejections in light of the amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Comments on Election/Restriction

Claims 15-30 were subjected to a restriction requirement. Applicants respectfully withdraw claim 15-30 with traverse. Applicants hereby reserve the right to petition the director to review the requirement for restriction. Petition may be deferred until after the final action or allowance of claims to the invention elected (as per CFR 1.144).

Objection to claim

Claim 11 was objected to because of the use of the word "current" in line 1. Claim 11 has been amended accordingly to read "current applied using voltage of about 3 to about 100 volts". Applicants respectfully submit that this is a correct and clear recitation of Applicants' intended claim.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

Claims 1-6, 8-10, 11 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Wei et al. (US6,352,636). Applicants have amended claims 1 and 8-10 to include a limitation of the electropolishing solution comprising less than or equal to 5 weight percent water. Accordingly claim 6 is cancelled. Applicants submit that Wei et al. does not disclose electropolishing solution having an upper limit of 5 weight percent water. Wei et al. discloses 25-75 volume percent of water in electrolyte solvents (Table II) and does not teach using an electrolyte solvent comprising less than 5 weight % water. Moreover, Wei et al do not suggest that stronger solutions (i.e., those containing less than 25% water) are attractive candidates for stripping processes. In fact, in column 2, lines 12-19, Wei et al. teaches away from the use of stronger solutions by stating that use of such solutions "can result in significant damage"

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to the workpiece. Thus Wei et.al. does not disclose or suggest all of the elements of the currently amended claims 1 and 8-10.

Claims 2-5, 11 and 13 depend from claims 1 and 10 respectively, and are therefore believed to be in condition for allowance.


Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claim 7 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Wei et al. (US 6,352,636) as applied to claim 1; and claims 12 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being as being unpatentable over Wei et al. (US 6,352,636) as applied in claim 10 and further in view of Blomsterberg (4,269,677). Claims 7, 12 and 14 depend from the independent claims 1 and 10 respectively. In view of the amendment of claims 1 and 10, claims 7, 12 and 14 are believed to be in condition for allowance

Summary

In view of the foregoing arguments, Applicants believe that claims 1-14 are in condition for allowance, and courteously solicit a prompt allowance of these claims. Should the Examiner believe that anything further action is needed to place the application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the Applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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